

## California State Journal of Medicine.

Owned and Published Monthly by the

Medical Society of the State of California

PHILIP MILLS JONES, M. D., Secretary and Editor

### PUBLICATION COMMITTEE.

Langley Porter, M.D.  
Martin Flecher, M.D.

John Spencer, M.D.  
Harry M. Sherman, M.D.

### ADDRESS ALL COMMUNICATIONS

Secretary State Society, - - -	Butler Building, San Francisco.
State Journal, - - -	
Official Register, - - -	

### IMPORTANT NOTICE!

All Scientific Papers submitted for Publication must be Typewritten.

Notify the office promptly of any change of address, in order that mailing list and addresses in the Register may be corrected.

VOL. VI

JUNE., 1908.

No. 6

## EDITORIAL NOTES.

### A WORD EXPLANATORY.

At the Coronado meeting, one or two members of the Society stated to the editor that some members—the number or proportion seemed to be but vaguely known—were restless under the assessment of \$3 which is paid by every county society to the State Society for each of its members. It was stated that a number of members could not see what good or benefit was derived from the State Society membership; and that, if they could, they would belong only to the county society. There were also some other things said, all of which the editor took unto himself and mentally digested. As a result, when the House of Delegates met and reports were being presented by the officers, the editor took the occasion to present, verbally, a resume of his connection with the Society and his views on the subject of the proper work of the Society. After the session he was requested, by a large number of delegates, to place the remarks in writing and publish them in the JOURNAL. It is for this reason that the following very personal editorial has been written and here appears. And for the reason that it is so personal, something distasteful to the editor himself, this word of explanation has been made.

### *Are Medical Organization and the State Society Worth While?*

I ask your indulgence, for a few moments, that I may present to you some facts, partly historical and partly statements of altruistic purposes; but I believe that they are of sufficient importance to require your attention.

In 1902, at the request of the council, I assumed the editorial control of your JOURNAL—in fact, started it. This was not hastily done but only after due consideration and careful thought; nor was it done with any misunderstanding existing between myself and the Council. I had for some time been studying the awful proprietary degradation to which our profession had been brought, and it seemed to me that a change might be brought about if, even in one state, the medical profession could be brought together and shown just a little of the actual condition. It was well known, at least to the then members of the Council, that I proposed, as editor, to use the full strength of the JOURNAL for this purpose and to further the ends of medical organization and the medical control of public health matters.

As you all know, conditions in the medical profession in this state were, at that time, chaotic, to say the least. The State Society had never numbered more than 350 members and very few counties in the state could boast a county medical society. War had reigned in our profession constantly for much more than a quarter of a century. Of health laws there were, practically, none; our State Board of Health could only exercise an advisory activity which it did in a most unsavory manner. The Council decided to undertake the better organization of the medical profession in the state and they asked me to conduct the work. Before the end of 1903 a considerable number of county medical societies had been organized, and during the following year the work was continued. In some sections where meetings were called to organize county medical societies, it was necessary for the Councillors present to introduce to each other medical gentlemen who had been living in the same town for years, but were not on speaking terms.

The work proceeded; at times, most discouragingly; but there was enough of encouragement to warrant keeping it up and enough to make me believe that much betterment might come about in the course of years. Again I thought the whole matter over carefully. I realized that the Society could not ever, no matter how it might grow, nor how its JOURNAL might prosper, pay me an income in any way approaching that which I had earned in practice and could earn again, either in the same way or if my time were wholly devoted to other things. But it also was evident that the Society would be in a position to pay enough to provide a sufficient living and cover my modest wants; it was also evident that some of the objects

for which we should stand and for which we should fight, could be achieved.

Was it worth while to give the best years of a man's life to this work, or not? Did it appear that the results would be commensurate with the effort? To me it did so appear. The dawn of a better day for decent materia medica products more honestly and more truthfully put before our profession, was already breaking. In many counties large and influential county medical societies had come into existence. The influence of the profession was being felt in the legislature. It seemed worth while—to me.

But does it seem worth while to you? Does it seem worth while to strive for a live, active, studious, respect-compelling medical society in each county; which will be, de facto if not de jure, the board of health of that county? To bring about a condition of public instruction in public health matters which will insure respect for our profession in the public mind and obedience to our mandates in public health matters? To bring an end to those bitter and disgraceful fights among medical men which have been a lasting disgrace to our profession and have brought us into ridicule in the public mind and the public press? To promote peace and harmony in our ranks and a common purpose to be better physicians, better citizens, more watchful for the public good, more strenuous for the protection of life and health—particularly of the children of our state? To see to it that the men, the voters of our state will be so educated to the fact that our profession is striving to *prevent disease*, and that it is a friendly, studious unit, knowing full well what is best for the public protection, that no legislator will dare go to Sacramento and there cast his vote against any measure intended for the public health and supported by the united medical profession? To teach the public that tuberculosis is a preventable disease and need not kill its enormous quota; to teach them that typhoid is a filth disease and that he who has it has taken into his stomach, through his mouth, the feces or the urine of some other human being?

Is it worth while, do you think, to throw off the disgraceful yoke of the proprietary medicine manufacturer and to demand that he deal honestly and truthfully with us and not cause us to put, we know not what, into our patients or to sacrifice their lives through his lies and to his gain? Is it worth while to make of our societies educational centers so that each physician may profit from them and so that the public may come to know that the medical society exists for the purpose of the self-betterment, the self-government, the self-education of its members and consequently is of that much direct benefit to the public—and that the medical man who does not belong to, and take an active part in, his society's work, is by that much the loser and less well equipped physician?

Is it worth while, speaking from a purely

material standpoint, to show to the public that it is an expensive thing for a physician to keep well equipped, mentally and instrumentally, and that he who pays cheap fees must necessarily get cheap and poor service? To show them that the bill for contract medical service, or lodge service, is a mighty heavy one, in the long run, and that *it is the sick man who pays it?* To instill into the public mind a knowledge of the fact that decent fees must be paid in order to properly support physicians and thus ensure their maintaining a proper standard of education and up-to-dateness? To force insurance companies to a realization of the fact that they must pay decently for professional services; that medical men are not merely corporation pups?

Is the JOURNAL of your society worth while? Is it of any value to you? Does it in any way bring you into touch with other parts of the state, with what men in other counties are doing, with what is going on in the work of your fellow physicians elsewhere? Does it ever offer you anything of value to yourself? If not, it is useless; let us stop it.

The constitution of our state society says that the society exists for certain purposes: "To federate and bring together into one compact organization the entire medical profession of the state \* \* \* to extend medical knowledge and advance medical science; \* \* \* to elevate the standard of medical education and to secure the enactment and enforcement of just medical laws; to promote friendly intercourse among physicians; to guard and foster the material interests of its members and to protect them against imposition, and to enlighten and direct public opinion in regard to the problems of state medicine, so that the profession shall become more capable and honorable within itself, and more useful to the public, in the prevention and cure of disease, and in prolonging and adding comfort to life." Are these things worth while or are they not? That is the question which squarely confronts us. Those are the purposes for which the Society was organized; for which it exists, if so be it exists for anything. Are they worth while?

If it is not worth while to do these things—all of them, or any of them or so many of them as we may be able to do, then in God's name, let us find it out at once! If it is not worth while to strive for all this betterment, then let us cut off a lot of unnecessary work and expense. Reduce assessments to a minimum; stop the JOURNAL; close up the office; abandon all effort to educate the public; let the legislature ignore, again and forever, the welfare of the people; let chaos reign again as it reigned before—and let me devote my time and attention to other, and, speaking financially, more profitable things.

But if these things are worth while—and it is up to the members of the medical profession to say whether or not they are to be considered as worth working for—as worth while—then let us get busy and each one do his best and his hardest to

bring them about. Work can not be done without the expenditure of fuel; and fuel costs money. Let every delegate go home to his county society and tell them exactly what the state Society stands for; what the altruistic aims and desires of its council and its secretary are; what we are striving to accomplish and with how little available money. Explain to them, from the financial statements which are in your hands, just where the income of the Society comes from and just where it goes. If it is the opinion of the members of county societies that all this effort, this work, this expense is useless and needless and foolish, then let us find it out and stop it; otherwise, let us go ahead with it as actively as possible.

Most assuredly, unless there is a desire for the work to be done, unless there is active co-operation all over the state; unless there is a real and genuine feeling that these things are worth the doing and that the heart of the medical profession is in sympathy with them—actual and active, not merely passive—unless every man stands ready and willing to do his part to help make some of these things come true, why I certainly have no desire to waste any more of my time on work that is undesirable. Better far that we stop at once, rather than to go further with what is of no interest and no value to those for whom it is intended. But let us have no misunderstandings; let us get as far away from hypocrisy as the good Lord will let us; let us be honest with ourselves and if we undertake to do these things, let us do them as well and as thoroughly as we can.

Peace, harmony, respect and that honorable repute which should be ours in every community, can not be secured with a club nor through strife. They may be had only by industry and painstaking work. Let every community in our state come to realize that its medical society is one of the most valuable assets in its position; that its medical men there meet for study to the end that their services may be more valuable to the public; that the only "medical trust" is the trust of the people's health which we took into our hands when we assumed the duties and the responsibilities of the physician; that the altruistic work of our profession in dealing with the problems of preventive medicine is entirely and essentially different from the work of any other profession or calling and that the people alone benefit from our energies; let these things be done and the people so taught and we shall see an end to the injurious practices of contract and lodge work and an end to the scoffing against our profession which is so common in the lay press.

It is for these things that the Society is supposed to exist; it is to secure the accomplishment of these things that I have given my time and my energies; but no one man can do much alone; every member of every county society in the state must do his part, and if every one *will* so do his duty, we shall soon see results accomplished which, a few years ago, we would have thought utterly impossible of attainment. Is it worth while?

## UPON THE ANATOMY OF THE THYROID AND PARATHYROID.\*

By ALLEN F. GILLIHAN, M. D., Berkeley.

Upon removing the muscles of the anterior part of the neck, viz., sterno-mastoid, sterno-hyoid, omo-hyoid and sterno-thyroid, we find lying directly upon or rather around the upper end of the trachea, a very vascular, irregular-shaped, gland-like structure; the thyroid body. It is made up of lateral lobes connected by the isthmus. Each lobe is of an irregular, pyramidal form of three surfaces. The anterior or antero-lateral surface of each lobe is in contact with the sterno-thyroid, sterno-hyoid and omo-hyoid muscles; the internal or mesial surface is in contact with the trachea, the recurrent laryngeal nerve and the esophagus; the posterior or posterolateral surface is in contact with the carotid sheath containing the great vessels and nerves of the neck, the scaleni and longus colli muscles and the prevertebral fascia.

The whole gland weighs from thirty to sixty grams. Each lobe is about five centimeters in length and from two to three centimeters in breadth, the right being usually the larger. The isthmus is about one centimeter in length and in breadth; there is occasionally seen a single pyramidal lobe arising from the isthmus or from the adjacent border of either lobe which may extend upwards in front of the trachea, sometimes as high as the pomum Adami.

The exact location of the gland varies; the bases of the lobes are usually situated at about the level of the fifth or sixth tracheal ring, and the apices lie by the sides of the thyroid cartilage. The isthmus usually lies upon the second and third tracheal rings. It is important to remember that these positions may vary, the isthmus possibly being higher or lower, or even in some cases of probably defective development, entirely absent.

The thyroid is one of the most vascular organs of the body, being supplied in all cases by four distinct arteries, and in some cases by five. Each lobe is provided with a superior and an inferior thyroid artery; the superior thyroid artery is the first branch given off by the external carotid, it usually enters the front surface of the apex at each lobe; the inferior thyroid artery is from the thyroid axis—a branch of the sub-clavian—this usually enters the under surface of the base. Besides these there is sometimes a thyroidea ima, a branch from the innominate or arch of the aorta that ascends directly in front of the trachea to the isthmus. The superior and inferior thyroid arteries subdivide into many branches which ramify over the surface of the lobe before penetrating the capsule. In nearly every case very free anastomosis occurs between either the inferior and superior of one side, or between the inferior thyroid arteries of each lobe by way of the isthmus, rarely between the superior thyroid arteries.

The veins are large and numerous. After forming a plexus upon the surface, they unite to form the superior, middle and inferior thyroid veins. The

\* Read at the Thirty-eighth Annual Meeting of the State Society, Coronado, April, 1908.